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On the Duration of Life among the Clergy. By WILLIAM A. GUY, M.B., Cantab. *Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians; Professor of Forensic Medicine, King's College; Physician to King's College Hospital; Honorary Secretary to the Statistical Society.*

[Read before the Statistical Society of London, November 17th, 1851.]

AN Essay by the present writer, "On the Duration of Life in the Members of the Several Professions," was read before the Statistical Section of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, on the 11th of September, 1846, and published in the ninth volume of the *Journal of the Statistical Society*. That Essay, which was based chiefly, but not exclusively, on facts gleaned from the Annual Register, contrasted the mean age at death of members of the three learned professions, of the Army and Navy, of men devoted to literature and science, to the fine arts, and to trade and commerce, and compared it with certain standards previously established. In the case of some of these professions and occupations, the averages obtained from the Annual Register were viewed in connection with numerical results derived from other sources.

The Essay now referred to was intended to form the introduction to a series of communications in which the duration of life of each profession should be examined by itself, with the aid of new facts drawn from sources other than the Annual Register. The present Essay is the first submitted to the Society in fulfilment of that intention. The facts which form the staple of it are derived from four sources:— 1. The County Histories of Northampton, Cheshire, Berkshire, and Surrey, and the History of Leeds, which histories have already supplied materials for an Essay on the Duration of Life among the English Gentry, also published in the ninth volume of the *Journal* of this Society. 2. The Annual Register, which, as has just been stated, supplied the facts for the Essay first referred to. 3. Chalmers' Biographical Dictionary, which, having been published between the years

1812 and 1817, affords the requisite data for determining the mean duration of life of professional men up to a comparatively recent period. And 4. That portion of the obituaries of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, from 1824 to 1839 inclusive, which is headed "Clergy deceased."

A few words of explanation will be required in respect of each of these classes of facts.

The ages at death obtained from the County Histories and from the History of Leeds were copied originally from mural tablets, and are those of the clergymen of the places described in the histories, of whom the greater number have been in no way distinguished from other members of their profession. The results may therefore be presumed to represent very fairly the mean duration of life of the clergy of town and country during two or three centuries.

The ages at death extracted from the Annual Register are those of clergymen sufficiently distinguished by scientific or literary attainments, or otherwise sufficiently well known to command a place in the obituary which forms a part of that publication. The short biographical sketches from which the ages at death are taken are brought down to within a very few years of the present time, and the mean duration of life is, therefore, that of clergymen dying in the latter half of the last and the first half of the present century. One peculiarity may be expected to exist in the facts obtained from this source. They will naturally comprise, in the case of the clergy, as of other professions, instances of great longevity, introduced as items of interesting intelligence.

The ages at death obtained from the Biographical Dictionary are those of a higher order of clergymen, who have achieved a distinguished place in literature and science, including a considerable proportion of the successive occupants of the episcopal bench, with some dissenting clergymen, and a few Roman Catholic priests. As the Biography is very comprehensive, the ages at death are those of clergymen who have lived at very different periods of time, from the date of the earliest trustworthy records down to the early part of the present century. As mere longevity would not give any claim to a place in this Biographical Dictionary, the results may be expected to differ in this respect from those drawn from the facts recorded in the Annual Register.

The results obtained from the obituaries of the *Gentleman's Magazine* may be expected to represent with great fidelity the duration of life of the clergy of the Church of England in town and country, inasmuch as no system of exclusion appears to be practised, but all known deaths are recorded indiscriminately. In order to facilitate calculation, I have taken the first thousand deaths occurring between the years 1834 and 1839 inclusive, omitting all clergymen not belonging to the Established Church. I am indebted to Mr. Neison for a life-table founded upon these facts (see Table V.).

By means of the facts derived from these three sources, I have constructed a series of four tables, the counterparts of tables contained in former contributions. Of these tables, the first exhibits the number of deaths recorded during each year of life; the second, the number and per-centage proportion at each quinquennial period; the third, the number and per-centage proportion at each decennial period; while

the fourth table shows the mean age at death of all who died after completing their 25th, 30th, 40th, and 50th years respectively.

Of these four tables, the last is the most valuable for purposes of comparison. I shall accordingly make it the subject of the few observations which I have to offer on the duration of life among the clergy, considered by itself, and without reference to the relative duration of life among other classes of persons.

TABLE I.

Age.	Number of Deaths.				Age.	Number of Deaths.			
	County Histories.	Annual Register.	Biographical Dictionary.	Gentleman's Magazine.		County Histories.	Annual Register.	Biographical Dictionary.	Gentleman's Magazine.
26....	....	2	....	11	65....	14	17	24	20
27....	4	3	....	10	66....	19	27	28	20
28....	1	4	4	12	67....	20	17	21	31
29....	2	3	1	7	68....	19	30	26	28
30....	1	4	2	10	69....	12	12	22	11
31....	....	5	3	11	70....	16	21	26	51
32....	2	5	1	12	71....	11	23	24	30
33....	5	9	1	11	72....	11	28	36	29
34....	2	6	2	6	73....	18	38	35	23
35....	4	4	3	10	74....	12	29	32	28
36....	3	3	2	14	75....	14	37	20	40
37....	2	4	1	9	76....	17	29	25	37
38....	1	12	7	8	77....	12	35	22	28
39....	4	3	3	3	78....	14	31	21	28
40....	6	10	12	13	79....	6	17	27	8
41....	4	....	5	8	80....	13	47	17	36
42....	7	16	5	7	81....	10	22	19	15
43....	8	7	7	9	82....	10	33	19	24
44....	10	6	4	6	83....	7	28	17	16
45....	7	8	6	10	84....	5	22	17	19
46....	7	4	7	5	85....	2	24	11	19
47....	3	6	10	10	86....	1	12	11	12
48....	10	4	7	9	87....	4	10	8	9
49....	11	8	9	9	88....	6	20	13	12
50....	8	10	10	8	89....	2	6	4	2
51....	1	6	2	4	90....	7	12	5	9
52....	2	8	15	11	91....	1	4	1	3
53....	12	9	16	11	92....	1	7	4	4
54....	10	8	16	11	93....	....	5	....	....
55....	18	9	22	11	94....	....	5	2	4
56....	12	8	22	15	95....	2	5	5	3
57....	12	7	15	13	96....	....	....	....	....
58....	19	13	17	12	97....	....	1	....	....
59....	12	6	14	6	98....	1	....	1	....
60....	13	19	16	21	99....	1	....	....	....
61....	11	12	23	8	100 & upwds. }	....	6*	1†	....
62....	9	17	26	8					
63....	23	20	27	27					
64....	-18	13	22	15	Max.	99	108	100	....

* Two of 100, one of 103, one of 105, one of 106, and one of 108.

† One of 100.

TABLE II.

Age.	County Histories.	Annual Register.	Biographical Dictionary.	Gentleman's Magazine.	Per-Centage Proportions.			
					County Histories.	Annual Register.	Biographical Dictionary.	Gentleman's Magazine.
26—30	8	16	7	50	1·39	1·66	0·77	5·00
31—35	13	29	10	50	2·27	3·02	1·10	5·00
36—40	16	32	25	47	2·80	3·33	2·75	4·70
41—45	36	37	27	40	6·29	3·85	2·97	4·00
46—50	39	32	43	41	6·82	3·33	4·73	4·10
51—55	43	40	71	48	7·53	4·16	7·81	4·80
56—60	68	53	84	67	11·88	5·52	9·24	6·70
61—65	75	79	122	78	13·11	8·22	13·42	7·80
66—70	86	107	123	141	15·03	11·13	13·53	14·10
71—75	66	155	147	150	11·54	16·13	16·17	15·00
76—80	62	159	112	137	10·84	16·54	12·32	13·70
81—85	34	129	83	93	5·94	13·42	9·13	9·30
86—90	20	60	41	44	3·50	6·24	4·51	4·40
91—95	4	26	12	14	0·70	2·71	1·32	1·40
96—100 & upwds.	2	7	2	....	0·35	0·78	0·22	....

TABLE III.

Age.	County Histories.	Annual Register.	Biographical Dictionary.	Gentleman's Magazine.	Per-Centage Proportions.			
					County Histories.	Annual Register.	Biographical Dictionary.	Gentleman's Magazine.
26—30	8	16	7	50	1·39	1·66	0·77	5·00
31—40	29	61	35	97	5·07	6·35	3·85	9·70
41—50	75	69	70	81	13·11	7·18	7·70	8·10
51—60	112	93	155	115	19·41	9·68	17·05	11·50
61—70	161	186	245	219	28·14	19·35	26·95	21·90
71—80	128	314	259	287	22·38	32·67	28·49	28·70
81—90	54	189	124	137	9·44	19·66	13·64	13·70
91—100 & upwds.	6	33	14	14	1·05	3·44	1·54	1·40

TABLE IV.

Age.	County Histories.	Annual Register.	Biographical Dictionary.	Gentleman's Magazine.
26 and upwards	63·54	68·81	66·13	64·14
31 ,,	64·04	69·49	66·42	66·05
41 ,,	65·55	71·82	67·60	69·44
51 ,,	68·74	74·04	69·43	71·94

TABLE V.
Expectation of Life of the Clergy, 1834—1839.

Age.	Expectation.	Age.	Expectation.	Age.	Expectation.
25.....	39·2953	50.....	21·7624	74.....	6·9522
26.....	38·4953	51.....	21·3584	75.....	6·5608
27.....	37·7567	52.....	20·2065	76.....	6·2014
28.....	37·0662	53.....	19·4600	77.....	5·8690
29.....	36·4112	54.....	18·7215	78.....	5·5374
30.....	35·7800	55.....	17·9920	79.....	5·2189
31.....	35·1579	56.....	17·3119	80.....	4·9024
32.....	34·5320	57.....	16·5643	81.....	4·6170
33.....	33·9010	58.....	15·8288	82.....	4·3287
34.....	33·2632	59.....	15·1702	83.....	4·2144
35.....	32·6190	60.....	14·4806	84.....	3·7721
36.....	31·9673	61.....	13·7938	85.....	3·5004
37.....	31·3787	62.....	13·1147	86.....	3·2306
38.....	30·6398	63.....	12·4505	87.....	2·9590
39.....	29·9636	64.....	11·7814	88.....	2·6853
40.....	29·2777	65.....	11·1920	89.....	2·4100
41.....	28·5152	66.....	10·6132	90.....	2·1347
42.....	27·8700	67.....	10·0482	91.....	1·8641
43.....	27·1483	68.....	9·5589	92.....	1·6111
44.....	26·3575	69.....	9·0759	93.....	1·3666
45.....	25·6767	70.....	8·6167	94.....	1·1250
46.....	24·9304	71.....	8·1786	95.....	·8888
47.....	24·1810	72.....	7·7545	96.....	·6666
48.....	23·1748	73.....	7·3456	97.....	·5000
49.....	22·4700				

As I have already stated, the last column of this table, which exhibits the duration of life as deduced from the obituaries of the Gentleman's Magazine, is that which most truly represents the average age attained by the clergy of the Established Church in town and country. The third column, based on the facts extracted from Chalmers' Biographical Dictionary, must be looked upon as representing the duration of life of such clergymen of different denominations as have attained to a certain degree of eminence in literature and science, and not as displaying the true value of life among the clergy, considered simply as clergy. The same remark applies, though not in the same degree, to the second column, comprising the averages deduced from the facts drawn from the Annual Register, in which record the obituaries partake somewhat of the character of short biographical memoirs of persons of distinction or notoriety, at the same time that they comprise several instances of longevity not to be found in the County Histories, the Biographical Dictionary, or the Gentleman's Magazine. Hence a paucity of deaths at early periods of life, and an excess of deaths at more advanced ages, and averages exceeding those of all the other columns. The mean ages given in the first column, as deduced from the facts supplied by the County Histories, are, it will be seen, lower than those displayed in the other columns. The difference between the several averages and those deduced from the facts drawn from the Gentleman's Magazine, amounts to from half a year to nearly four years. The disparity increases as the younger lives are excluded, and

is evidently dependent on the greater longevity of the clergy whose deaths are entered in the more modern record. The circumstance which offers the most probable explanation of this disparity, is the much earlier date of the County Histories. Of the deaths recorded in their pages, comparatively few occurred during the present century, and the majority much earlier, while all the deaths extracted from the Gentleman's Magazine occurred between the years 1834 and 1839. The Annual Register, which is also a more modern record, has supplied facts which yield higher averages than the County Histories. The averages deduced from the facts drawn from the Biographical Dictionary, on the contrary, resemble those based on the facts contained in the County Histories, in extending over a considerable period of time; and with this point of resemblance, the mean duration of life, approximating somewhat closely for the more advanced ages, certainly coincides. As there is the very best reason to believe* that an improvement has taken place in the duration of life of the upper and middle classes of society which would make itself sensibly felt in a comparison between an obituary embracing two or three centuries and one restricted to a few years of the present century, it is highly probable that the increased value of life shown in the last column (Gentleman's Magazine) is traceable chiefly to this cause.

Reverting to the opinion already expressed, that the averages for which the obituaries of the Gentleman's Magazine have supplied the materials represent most faithfully the duration of life of the clergy of the Established Church, considered simply as clergy, I have now to add, in respect of these averages, that they evidently do not admit of strict comparison with any other order of facts, whether contained in the table just referred to, or in any of my previous essays. I must, therefore, reserve these figures for future use, when I come to treat of the duration of life among the members of other professions. The only other use to which it has occurred to me to put the facts derived from this source, is the determination of the influence of town and country life respectively on the members of the same profession. Out of the 1000 deaths occurring between the years 1834 and 1839, eighty were those of clergymen whose lives were spent in cities or large towns. The average age at death of these eighty clergymen I have compared with the average age attained by other eighty clergymen, whose lives were passed in the rural districts. These latter were taken in the order in which they stood in the tables.

The following is the result of the comparison :—

TABLE VI.

Clergy of Towns and Cities.....	63·74
Clergy of Rural Districts.....	65·85
Difference.....	2·11

This difference of little more than two years in favour of clergymen resident in the country, is founded upon too small a number of facts to be regarded in any other light than as a probability, to be confirmed or weakened by further comparisons to be hereafter instituted.

Before dismissing the facts obtained from the Gentleman's Magazine, I must direct attention to Table V., which shows the expectation

* See table at p. 42, vol. ix., of the *Journal of the Statistical Society*.

of life for the clergy, and compare the figures in that table with the expectation of life prevailing among other classes. This comparison is made for four periods of life in the following table:—

TABLE VII.

Age.	Clergy. (Gentleman's Magazine.)	Gentry. (County Histories.)	Aristocracy.	Agricultural Labourers' Friendly Societies. (Mr. Neison.)	Liverpool Friendly Societies. (Mr. Neison.)	England. (Males.) (Mr. Neison.)
30	35·8	31·2	30·9	40·6	30·1	34·1
40	29·3	24·9	24·4	32·8	23·1	27·5
50	21·8	18·4	17·9	25·1	17·1	20·8
60	14·5	12·8	12·6	17·8	12·0	14·6

The result of this comparison is very favourable to the clergy. Their expectation of life at 30 years of age exceeds that of the English gentry by more than $4\frac{1}{2}$ years, and that of the aristocracy by nearly 5 years. It also exceeds the expectation for all England by about $1\frac{3}{4}$ years, but falls short of the expectation for agricultural labourers, being members of benefit societies, by nearly 5 years. The comparison between the clergy and the English gentry and aristocracy is, however, open to the objection, that the expectation of life in the case of the clergy is calculated upon deaths of very recent occurrence, while, in the case of the gentry and aristocracy, it is deduced from the deaths which have occurred during several centuries. The other comparisons between the clergy and the male population of England, and between the clergy and the agricultural labourers, being members of benefit societies, are free from that objection, inasmuch as the expectations of all these classes are calculated from deaths of recent occurrence.

Having made all the use of the facts gleaned from the *Gentleman's Magazine* of which they are at present susceptible, I proceed to make a few observations on the other new series of facts contained in the tables, namely, that taken from *Chalmers' Biographical Dictionary*.

In a former communication to the Society,* I presented a tabular comparison of the mean duration of life attained by different classes of society in successive half-centuries. From that table, it appeared that the value of life in England had been diminished in persons born during the last half of the 17th century, when compared with the half century preceding and following it; and, indeed, that there had been a progressive fall in the duration of life from the beginning of the 16th to the end of the 17th century, with a very marked reaction in persons born during the first half of the 18th century. Now, the facts extracted from the *Biographical Dictionary* have furnished me with the means of still farther testing this question, and I have accordingly prepared a table, in which the average duration of life, with the number of facts from which it is deduced, is compared with the averages of the table just referred to:—

* *Journal of the Statistical Society*, vol. ix. p. 42.

† It will be seen that, for the purposes of comparison, the half centuries, as given in the table, vol. ix. p. 42, are combined into centuries.

TABLE VIII.

	Biographical Dictionary.		Table at p. 42, vol. ix. of the Journal of the Statistical Society.	
	No. of Deaths.	Mean Age.	No. of Deaths.	Mean Age.
7th Century.....	1	63	....	....
8th " .....	....	....	....	....
9th " .....	....	....	....	....
10th " .....	....	....	....	....
11th "	3	73·33	....	....
12th "	4	72·25	....	....
13th "	1	52·00	17	63·18
14th "	5	67·40	21	46·42
15th "	18	68·78	53	58·24
16th "	253	66·86	802	65·13
17th "	426	66·41	3,248	58·57
18th "	193	66·78	1,942	63·75

If we confine our attention to the last three lines of this table, in which alone the mean results are based on a sufficient number of facts to inspire confidence, we shall observe that, though the average duration of life among the clergy in the last three centuries has fluctuated very slightly, it has followed the same rule as the larger number of facts, presenting a maximum in the 16th and a minimum in the 17th century. But as the difference between the greatest and least average is less than half a year, and the number of facts not very considerable, it is obviously quite possible that this correspondence between the two tables may be merely a coincidence.*

Another question which the tabular abstracts from the Biographical Dictionary afforded me the means of discussing, though the data are very far from being sufficiently numerous, is the relative duration of life of married and single clergymen. It happened that out of the whole number of clerical biographies, there were 370 in which the clergymen are stated to have been married, and 31 in which they are stated to have led a single life. The mean results are embodied in the following table:—

TABLE IX.

	No. of Deaths.	Mean Age.	Greatest Age.
Married	370	68·65	100
Single	31	63·13	84
Difference....	....	5·52	16

* It is stated in the text that the latest period to which Chalmers' Biographical Dictionary is brought down is the year 1817. Having extracted from the Annual Register the ages at death of several clergymen belonging to the same class as those whose lives are there recorded, I was curious to see whether they attained to a greater average age. The mean age of clergymen born in the 18th century is shown by the table to be 66·78, while the average age of 60 clergymen who died subsequently to the year 1817, and who were born towards the end of the 18th century, is no less than 70·30. This comparison affords a presumption in favour of a recent improvement in the duration of life among the clergy.

An average excess of $5\frac{1}{2}$ years in favour of the married clergy, and a difference between the maxima of 16 years, is probably too large to be attributable wholly to the insufficient number of facts. This table, therefore, may be also placed on record as establishing a probability, to be strengthened or weakened by the results of future inquiries.

In the tabular abstracts taken from Chalmers' Biographical Dictionary, it happens that the archbishops and bishops of the Established Church are distinguished from the body of the clergy. I am therefore in a condition to show the average and greatest ages attained by them; and as I have also extracted from the *Art de Vérifier les Dates* the ages at death of 42 popes and of 22 Romish saints, and from Alban Butler's *Lives of the Saints* the larger number of 141 deaths, I have appended a table in which these several averages are contrasted:—

TABLE X.

	No. of Deaths.	Average Age.	Greatest Age.
Popes	42	72·33	100
Archbishops	35	71·37	90
Bishops	145	71·23	100
Saints of Romish Calendar (Butler's Lives).....	141	69·25	120
Saints of Romish Calendar (Art de Vérifier les Dates)	22	69·09	100

The averages in this table are such as might have been expected. The popes, who, for the most part, have been elected at very advanced ages, survive by about one year the archbishops of the Established Church, who are appointed at a somewhat earlier period of life. The bishops of the Established Church come next in order, differing, however, very little from the archbishops. The saints of the Romish calendar attain a lower average age by about 3 years than the popes, and by about 2 years than the dignitaries of the Church of England. As, however, the saints of the Romish calendar are a very mixed class, comprising several of the popes, some few kings, many heads of the monastic orders, and a certain proportion of ascetics, I do not attach any importance to the comparison now made, but allow the results to stand in the table as possessing a certain amount of interest.

The interest attaching to this communication would have been greatly increased by a comparison of the average duration of life among the clergy with the duration of life among the members of other professions; but this comparison must necessarily be postponed till I come to treat of the duration of life among the members of the remaining professions.